The

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By Alfred Kazin
Reviewed by Howard Mumford Jones

"GRAND CANYON"
By Virginia Sackville-West
Reviewed by Bess Jones

"ZONES OF INTERNATIONAL FRICTION"
By Lawrence Henry Gipson
Reviewed by James Truslow Adams

CLIO AND MY AUNT BERTHA
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"THE YOUNG MATRIARCH"
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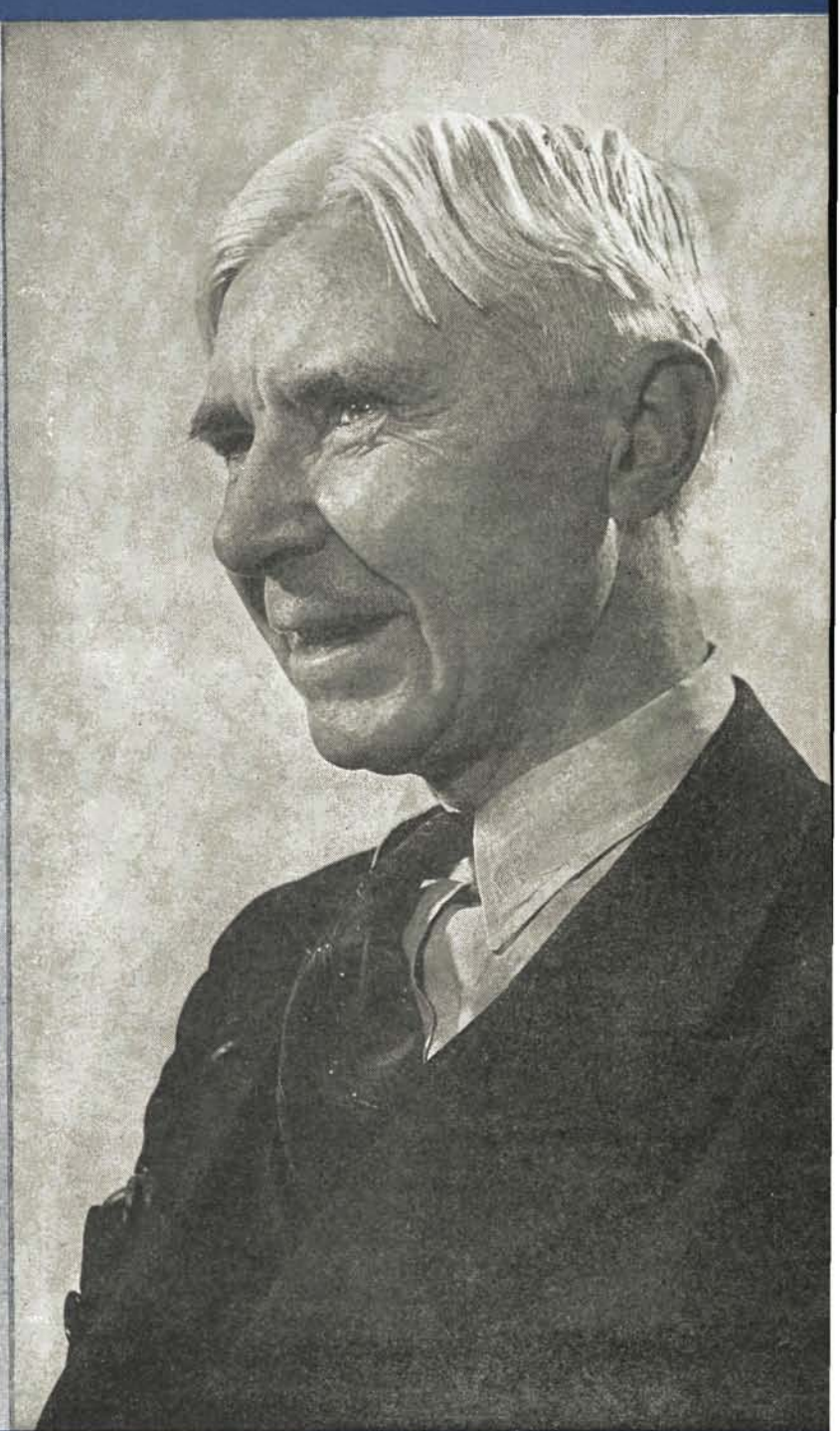

CARL SANDBURG, author of "Storm Over the Land." (See Page 3)

## THE AMERICAN SPIRIT IN WAR . . . . By Allan Nevins

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*The Saturday Review of Literature*

# The American Spirit in War

ALLAN NEVINS

WILLIAM JAMES spoke once of the "reality feeling" which men lack in days of prosperity but which overtakes them in hours of adversity, anxiety, and pain. We have hardly yet gained our "reality feeling" in the present war. It is now some ten months old; it began with a terrible disclosure of unreadiness; it has contained more reverses than successes; it still finds us on the defensive, with much once American-ruled territory in Japanese hands. But the fighting has been so far distant that its cruelties are hard to grasp. While we have raised huge armies our casualty lists have been few and short. Though we have debated stringent revenue measures, we have hardly felt the pinch of the tax-gatherer's operations. We have discussed our ultimate war objectives only in general terms, without coming to grips on controversial issues. No doubt the national spirit is good, but many millions of people do not yet have the "reality feeling" that will ultimately be unescapable.

We are likely to be misled by the phrase "the Second World War" and by the superficial analogies between this conflict and the last. For while to Europeans the First World War was a struggle of the greatest magnitude and of desperation, it cost Americans no heavy loss of life, no terrible drain of treasure, no grueling strain upon physical and nervous energies. The fifty thousand dead were a tragic roster, but in peace times we slew more than thirty thousand on our automobile highways. The expenditures of the war looked heavy when taken alone, but when balanced against our war profits during the period of neutrality they were less formidable. To find a period in which the United States suffered from a "reality feeling" of intense strain and anguish, we must revert to the Civil War; the only war in which we endured losses on the appalling scale measured by the chief European Powers in 1914-18, and by Russia and China in this conflict. As our present ordeal becomes grimmer, we shall recur more and more to the Civil War for parallels.

Such lessons as the War Between the States offers today are chiefly moral and psychological, but they are none the less important. Before 1861, as Lord Acton wrote, the American people had achieved two great feats in practical politics—had solved with astonishing and theretofore unexampled success two problems which had baffled the capacities of other nations. They had set up a system of Federal government which prodigiously increased the national power, and yet preserved local privileges and liber-

**George Fort Milton**

ties. They had founded their government on the principle of absolute equality, and yet had not forfeited security of property or individual freedom. The Civil War was a conflict not so much over slavery as over different conceptions of the way in which these two achievements should be safeguarded. Americans proved in 1861-65 that they were ready, on an issue chiefly of principle, to raise armies greater in proportion to the population than those of Napoleon; to pour out more than six hundred thousand lives; to endure endless humiliations, griefs, and anxieties; and in countless instances to face undaunted not merely immediate impoverishment but the ruin of all future prospects. What they did once they can and if necessary they will do again, for they are the same American people as of old.

We have here two books* which tell a part of that magnificent story on which the heart and will of the country can stay itself amid similar exertions. Mr. Sandburg presents the imposing outlines of the Civil War drama, giving us not a formal history but a "profile" or rapid, graphic sketch. Nearly all the material is drawn from the four volumes of his wartime biography of Lincoln. He is interested not in novelty of fact but of treatment, bringing out the commanding personalities, the crucial events, and the representative incidents in a bold and telling way; his style nervous and imaginative, his human sympathy always alert. Many sections of his larger work have been rewritten, while the arrangement and perspective are fresh. But the merit of the book lies in the skill with which he narrates "the big moments dazzling with decisions at bloody crossroads," the poetic insight which frequently marks his study of fateful actions, the penetrating interpretation which he occasionally gives to men who helped shape destiny. Mr. Milton's work is more specialized. He deals primarily with the fierce internal struggle waged by the Northern majority to maintain its own unity. From the very beginning of the Civil War division and discontent were aggressively manifested in many areas. They grew stronger in periods of doubt, disaster, and discouragement; and the story of the way in which treason was defeated, and the forces of demoralization and destruction were thwarted, is made genuinely thrilling. The author has levied effectively on unused materials in the National Archives, and especially upon the official documents relating to sedition.

In Mr. Sandburg's book the theme is heroism, the People is the protagonist. As he sums it up, his history holds "valor and struggle worth looking at, days of doom and humility not lack-

*STORM OVER THE LAND. A Profile of the Civil War By Carl Sandburg. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1942. 440 pp. $3.50.
ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE FIFTH COLUMN. By George Fort Milton. New York: Vanguard Press. 1942. 364 pp. $3.50.



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ing their lessons, psalms of desolation and the silent writhings of the agonized, rainbow promise of hope and dream for the American Union of States." The confusion, blundering, faintheartedness, and dishonesty are not glossed over; but they make a background or foil against which the tenacity, courage, and self-sacrifice shine more brightly. The reader of this book will find good, simple, elementary accounts of the bloodiest battles—Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Chickamauga; of the march across Georgia; of the Presidential campaign of 1864; of Lincoln speaking at Gettysburg, visiting Grant, and inspecting Richmond; of Petersburg and Appomattox. He will find many a sentence written with pleasing cadence and happy epithet: "Around swampland and swale, in red clay and sandy land, in thickets of jack pine intermixed with scrub oak, cedar, ash, walnut, and a tanglefoot underbrush, the men of Grant and Lee were to grapple and to lie by thousands in rows and piles and sudden disorderly huddles, some of them pillowed in peace on a smooth green wilderness moss that had seldom seen the great white sun." But above all, the reader will find a multiplicity of anecdotes, incidents, and sayings that humanize the tale and bring its griefs, humors, and exploits directly home to us.

It is the devotion of the common man that stands out in highest relief. Emerson touched the vital truth when he wrote that before the war patriotism had been parades and salutes; but "now the deaths of thousands and the determination of millions of men and women show it real." On both sides the spirit, at its best, was the same. The Wisconsin private who gaily called out as one hand was shattered at Bull Run, "There goes a right hand for the Union, boys!" was matched by the Alabama colonel who, surrounded at Antietam, shouted defiantly to his men, "We are flanked, boys, but let's die in our tracks." Longfellow's son, both shoulders pierced by a bullet, who let out "not a single murmur or complaint though he has a wound through him a foot long," was more than matched by the Virginian who, when anesthetics gave out, played his violin without missing a note for forty minutes while surgeons amputated his leg. Joseph E. Johnston, as a bullet all but threw him from the saddle, gravely remarked: "If a surgeon is within call, and not too busy, at his convenience—perfect convenience—he might as well look me over." When gallantry was needed, who more dashing than Forrest's riders? But on the Union side there was General Averell, who after a three weeks' raid across the Alleghenies, fording streams, crossing broken country, and fighting skirmishes, reported: "My command has marched, climbed, slid, and swam 350 miles since the 8th instant." Lee declared of the boys in gray: "There never were such men in an army before. They will go anywhere and do anything if properly led." Grant and Sherman would have said no less of the boys in blue.

Behind the lines the situation was often depressing enough. Mr. Sandburg tells us that in 1864 a Pennsylvania editor in Washington asked Thaddeus Stevens to introduce him to some member of Congress friendly to Lincoln's renomination; and Thad grimly led him to the desk of Isaac N. Arnold of Chicago as "the only one I know." The situation was not really as bad as that. Public sentiment in due time forced Lincoln's renomination by enthusiastic acclamation. But as Mr. Milton makes plain, at certain crises the hopes of defeatists and traitors rose high. What stopped the fifth column was not pious expostulations or cheery propaganda, but the stern measures of determined men, backed by stern loyal sentiment. The principal heroes of Mr. Milton's narrative are Lincoln, who knew when to be mild and when to be resolute, and who so won the heart of the nation that treason could win no victories by the ballot-box; a few able governors, chief among them Oliver P. Morton, well-called "dictator of Indiana"; and a body of alert District Commanders and Provost Marshals. The Secret Service, so vigorously advertised by its head L. C. Baker, accomplished little.

More than once—in fact, on three occasions—the malcontents and traitors of the Civil War made a formidable demonstration. In 1862 the Knights of the Golden Circle, who numbered perhaps 70,000 men, largely armed, reached their apogee in the Ohio Valley. But the measures of Stanton, Morton, and Carrington, culminating in the return of sixty Federal indictments and in the use of Federal troops to overawe a Copperhead mass-meeting in Indianapolis, checked the movement. In 1863 the ill-managed draft produced an alarming explosion of riots; but they quickly burned themselves out. As Mr. Milton says, they were a symptom rather than a disease, and in New York resulted primarily from the high cost of living and Negro competition in the labor market. Finally, early in 1864 treason took on a clearer organization than ever before. The Order of the Sons of Liberty, captained by astute leaders in half a dozen States, of whom Vallandigham was the most prominent, became genuinely

(*Continued on page* 19)

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# Literary History and Literary Plenty

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

FOR some twenty-five years, in a period overly given to literary theorizing, critical controversy has swept through the intellectualist magazines and into some books. The little periodicals which once died to make verse free have been revived to make criticism apocalyptic. According to one school it seems to be more important to scrutinize a poem than to respond to it; and according to another it is more important to adopt the party line than to write the poem. At one time or another apostles of new churches have arisen, as in the days of the Protestant Reformation: one remembers the curiously theological billingsgate in which the late Professor Irving Babbitt assailed the moderns and the equally Miltonic cursing with which Mr. H. L. Mencken assailed Professor Babbitt. He who belongs to the True Faith according to Calverton can only cast out into the darkness those Saracenic infidels who believe according to that old deluder, Mr. T. S. Eliot. *The New Masses* has denounced, the *Kenyon Review* has mourned. Even university classrooms, theoretically a place for the dispassionate examination of controverted matters, have become in many instances not the home of a fugitive and cloistered virtue but meeting places for the congregation *de propaganda fidei*.

It is curious and important that while theories of poetry, of art, of sensibility, of communication have been thus debated over the length and breadth of the land, the theory of literary history has been in the main passed over. This is, I think, curious and important for a number of reasons. Much critical fury has been expended in setting up the virtues of what this or that living writer felt, by the critical school in question, to be "our man" and therefore the quintessence of modernism, but much energy has gone also into the revaluation of historical literary figures. Not to mention the classic case of Donne, on this side of the water we have broken up the yard of bearded poets of whom the late John Macy complained. The faithful have been commended to Melville, Thoreau, Hawthorne, and Emerson but been warned away from Bryant, Longfellow, Holmes, and James Russell Lowell. The fate of Lowell is illuminating. Friend and companion of Charles Eliot Norton from whom the neo-humanists are descended, a writer for whom, one would think, many an ardent intellectualist would want to break a lance, he has recently been presented to the public principally as a person who, never having been in the South, did not understand the plantation system. His republican democracy, his wide and esoteric reading (so like that of Mr. T. S. Eliot), his faith in "standards," his quondam radicalism, his belief that literature had a public responsibility—these elements, ought to lead to a reëxamination of Lowell, a restatement of his values and his failure, a search into the problem whether bookishness, as in the case of a good many modern critics, is not, after all, the principal weakness of criticism.

IF the treatment of Lowell in a recent biography lacks historic balance, the modes by which, for example, Melville has been promoted and Poe has been relegated to that "vulgarity" with which Aldous Huxley charges him are likewise unhistorical. It may be doubted whether the problem of evil and good was felt by Melville precisely after the fashion of the moderns or whether it was intrinsically a deeper part of his sensibility than it was a part of that other arch-romantic, the errant Poe. If elevated and consistent excellence of texture is the sign of a distinguished prose style, Melville is obviously as uncertain as Faulkner or Thomas Wolfe; and a man like Parkman is perhaps the more faultless artist. But Parkman will not do as a stick to beat the moderns with; and Melville and Thoreau, Hawthorne and Whitman have really been used quite unhistorically for a spiritual typology that, however interesting, is radically false to time and place.

Critical energy, critical controversy, critical evangelicism have gone into this typology and have ignored the basic problem of literary history—the question why, in time and space, artists are as they were (or are) and not otherwise? It is a striking truth that since the appearance of that melancholy adventure in democratic action, the "Cambridge History of American Literature," we have had no history of the national letters which, if it

**Alfred Kazin has no theory except the theory that literature ought to mean something to mankind.**

amounted to more than textbook stuff, was not essentially a political pamphlet. Parrington, Calverton, Hicks, Ludwig Lewisohn, Oscar Cargill, Bernard Smith, Van Wyck Brooks are representative; and each has wanted to prove something, to take a stand, to defy the enemy, to show that writing must take a new turn. Even so cogent a book as Mr. Matthiessen's "American Renaissance" exists as an analysis of "the conceptions held by five of our major writers concerning the function and nature of literature"; even Mr. Joseph Warren Beach's "American Fiction, 1920-1940" was written "at the request of a friend" to demonstrate that the novels of eight authors aren't really in bad taste. Mr. Matthiessen and Mr. Beach are trained scholars, but lesser writers lack their command of evidence. Consequently, many another book mounts a thesis and then hunts around for likely historical evidence.

THE absence of interest in literary history is the more amazing because the central problem in these vast controversies has been the extent to which literature influences, or is influenced by, society. On the extreme left this influence is felt to exist, to be central, and to be demonstrable. On the extreme right it is denied, and the work of literature exists in a sort of Crocean vacuum as an exercise in sensibility. In between there are all sorts of theories. One would suppose that writers might turn dispassionately to examine the relevant historical evidence (of which there is a great abundance), but they have not done so. It is a slow process, this sifting of historical evidence, and it is much more fun to dogmatize. Mr. Kaz-



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m, however, in "On Native Grounds," * has tried to sift evidence and to refrain from dogma. He has tried, in other words, to write literary history.

I am not sure I know what literary history is, but I suppose its practitioner tries to answer four questions. First, do the leading, representative, or influential books of a period fall into any sort of pattern that makes sense at once to the historian and to the modern reader? Second, what are the social forces, the public issues, the general intellectual controversies that have shaped the literary trends of the epoch? Third, what are the drives, conscious or unconscious, rational or irrational, revealed in the biography of the author or in his writing that have helped to shape his work? And lastly, what is the probable human importance of his work either as an esthetic experience still having vitality or as a philosophic expression of human values?

These are, at any rate, important questions, and these are the questions which Mr. Kazin tries to answer about the prose literature of the last half century. By and large he has done a better job than anybody else. The organization of his book is at once chronological and thematic, a dual arrangement that permits him to discuss a work which is merely representative or documentary when that illumines a decade, and also to discuss a work which, he thinks, still illumines us.

He has omitted the drama and poetry, so that in the opinion of some he has omitted consulting two of the most sensitive barometers of our spiritual life, but there is no use asking for a different sort of book. He is sensitive, sympathetic, and informed. He has, so far as I can see, no theory to prove except the theory that literature ought to mean something to mankind. Too many writers talk as if men exist for books.

THERE are, to be sure, weaknesses. The last decade is too close for perspective, and I do not here comprehend the proportioning of his space. His discussion of Marxian criticism is out of all relation to his own estimate of its importance; and he is betrayed here and there—in his discussion of Ludwig Lewisohn or of Irving Babbitt—into unwonted repetitiousness. There are a good many social influences upon books and book-making he has ignored. He says nothing about the relation of creative writing to the magazine or to the vulgarization of the magazine; and though he hints at Hollywood, he says little about the profound effect of the moving picture. He does nothing with publishing history—with the courage of publishers who defied monopoly and the censor. He ignores the equally profound and sometimes deleterious effect of the Book-of-the-Month Club on publishing. Like too many other literary historians he has ignored the whole business of getting into print, the publicity racket, and much else. I do not see why, when he discusses Joseph Hergesheimer at some length, he refuses to discuss Francis Marion Crawford, a novelist of great talent; or why, when he is so serious about Henry Blake Fuller, he should not be equally serious about Winston Churchill. He says nothing about historical writing in the period.

Nevertheless no one, I think, has been more deft in setting the social scene for the appearance of literature in the successive stages of literary development; and no one has more economically marshalled his writers upon that stage. Equally admirable is the flexibility of temperament which enables Mr. Kazin to enter sympathetically into the inner life of so many writers so diverse. One has pleasure in the intelligence of his judgments, even if one occasionally wishes to disclaim them.

His style is always competent and occasionally distinguished; and though sometimes the adjectives flow a little freely, one is seldom at a loss as to what he means. In sum, Mr. Kazin, if he does not answer all my four questions, strives to answer them—knows, indeed, that they need answering, and tries to put the reader in the way of drawing conclusions of his own. I do not remember any literary history recently to appear that is more judicious or more sensitive or less inclined to take sides. Perhaps the appearance of "On Native Grounds" marks the recrudescence of an intelligent treatment of literary history *qua* history rather than as arsenal for controversial forays.

*ON NATIVE GROUNDS. By Alfred Kazin. An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1942. 518 pp. $3.75.

# The Story of the Rakonitz Clan

*THE YOUNG MATRIARCH. By G. B. Stern. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1942. 652 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by R. Ellis Roberts

THIS record of the Rakonitz clan ranges in time from 1887 to 1941, in generations from the great Anastasia, Maximilian, and Dietrich to the great-great nephews and nieces. It would have been the better, I think, for some pruning and cutting, a rather tighter hand on the spate of talk, the excess of parties and discussions, the splendor of fireworks which is the Rakonitz notion of a quarrel and a reconciliation. Also I find it hard to believe that the Rakonitz clan came so rarely into touch with people unconnected with the clan. Even the gentle, wise, quiet Annette, Dietrich's mistress for over twenty years and then his wife, has an horizon bounded by Rakonitz stars and comets, rising, setting, shooting, exploding from pole to pole.

"The Young Matriarch" is, however, a book of superb set-pieces,—the great dinner-party for Haidee Power's stepmother Gustava Czelovar, at which Gustava is extinguished by Dietrich's belated wedding, by Anastasia's pulsating, insolent vitality, and by the farcical introduction of La Mariposa, the young fortune-teller. That is a scene rich in humor and humanity; as is the very different scene in Vienna between Mr. Carey, Franz von Czarvas, Roberta Carey's niece, and Leopold, Franz's father—a scene in which the Rakonitz kinship is not strong enough to bridge the gulf between Vienna and California. Roberta, in her gracious, complacent self-importance, is one of the book's many successes; her uncle Carey is, however, done surprisingly badly. Californians of Carey's standing do not talk in the synthetic "American" Miss Stern gives him on page 116, and I find Loraine's old-stage, ham Irish dialogue equally false, though Loraine herself is a superb piece of comic invention.

There are other scenes, when Babette (born 1922), her brother David, and Friedl (Franz's young son) take control of the story, moving in their humor, their emotion, their reckless energy. Miss Stern shows an admirable sense of proportion when her book reaches these present days. She resists all temptation to fly to the battlefields, or rewrite any of the tales of heroism and martyrdom: here is simply the record of the war as it touches her Rakonitz clan, in exile, in prison, in concentration camps (at third-hand only); there are Rakonitzes in the army and air force, and all still stubbornly loyal to the clan, and learning, as Babs does, that this loyalty can only flourish if it is fed by a deeper loyalty to freedom, to love of country, and to love of truth. One of the most attractive of the family—Jason Marcus—becomes a symbol of this. He runs away, as a schoolboy, to Greece, the Greece of Socrates, of Aeschylus and Herodotus which is for him the world of reality, and as the book ends Babette hears that Jason, whom she denounced in 1937 as a renegade, "is fighting with the Greeks."



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# Preview of Destruction

*GRAND CANYON. By V. Sackville-West. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co.* 1942. 304 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BESS JONES

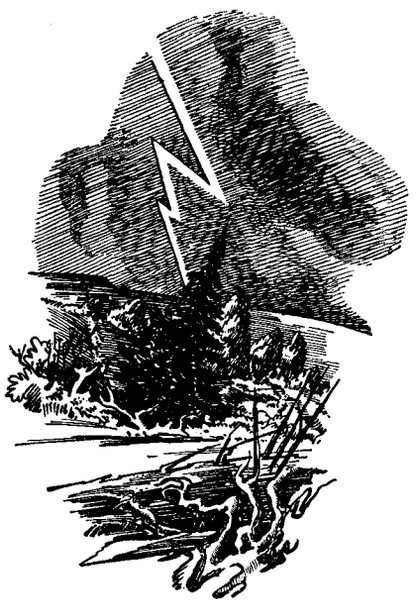
HOWEVER important its message, there is a real question whether the solemn admonition offered in this book is best conveyed through the medium of phantasy. It is even more doubtful whether the tone of a certain portion of it will be relished by those who dislike "open" letters addressed to either side of the Atlantic. For "Grand Canyon" is basically, if not intentionally, a somewhat patronizing statement of the limited American awareness and meager experience of suffering in the present war, and a kind of preview of destruction awaiting us upon the conclusion of a compromise peace. Moved forward in time to 1945, it assumes: that England succumbed to Germany in 1943; that the United States has victoriously ended what the author revealingly calls "its own war" with Japan; that, beguiled by German flattery and German promises, we bring about a cessation of hostilities that leaves us in possession of this continent and Germany of nearly everything else; that the war has taught us nothing except how to build faster planes; that we are too childish to recognize the interlude of quiet for what it is—a helpful period of rest and reorganization for our enemies before their new and final onslaught; and that, in the end, we also are doomed.

The setting, somewhat reminiscent of "Idiot's Delight," a hotel in an elevated, naturally grand, and remote place, though in fact very vulnerable to attack, is the Grand Canyon. The oddly assorted guests include Mrs. Temple, a sensitive and sympathetic Englishwoman, through whom most of the action is seen; Mr. Dale, an unprepossessing Englishman with a carefully cultivated detachment from everything; an eccentric Polish woman who carries a horrible parrot on her wrist; a French couple in love; a group of beautiful, utterly self-centered American boys and girls on a holiday; and two or three minor characters. The hotel manager, unsuspected by the guests, is a Nazi spy and saboteur planted here to perform a single act of treachery. Everything proceeds according to plan, and in the fire, confusion, and bombardment of a new outbreak of war the English, who have been through it all before, lead the little company down the long, slow trail to the bottom of the ridge. There they continue—live is hardly the word—in a curious dream world, almost a phantasy within a phantasy, where the blind see, the deaf hear, the consumptive loses her cough, the scorner melts into pity for the plight of the poor human race, and the aloof draw close with understanding. It is an idyllic world broken into briefly and sporadically by incomplete broadcasts announcing the horrors civilization is still undergoing, but one in which there are time, freedom, and capacity to envision a newer phase of harmony and unity. Before his capture by the Nazis, one of the characters voices the symbolism of the Canyon:

> The inhabitants of the highlands of Arizona are cut off from one another by the mile-deep abyss of the Grand Canyon. But if they follow the Colorado River down towards its mouth they find themselves at last in the plains at a point where the stream can be conveniently bridged. Something analogous is true in the psychological world. Human beings may be separated by differences of intellectual ability as wide and deep as the Grand Canyon, may peer at one another, uncomprehending, across great gulfs of temperamental dissimilarity. But it is always in their power to move away from the territories in which these divisions exist; it is always possible for them, if they so desire, to find in the common world of action the site for a broad and substantial bridge connecting even the most completely incommensurable of psychological universes.

To be truly successful a phantasy must conform as rigidly to recognizable truth in small details as a little girl's game at playing house. When she has finished washing her imaginery silver she will put it away in an imaginary sideboard drawer and with a literal turn of an imaginary key will lock it up against an imaginary theft. No one in the spirit of the play must break that inflexible pattern of pretense. Here and there Miss Sackville-West has forgotten that rule—there are lapses in themselves not serious but revealing an incomplete projection of her imagination and even a certain confusion in her logic. Minor examples are the incredible language of the young American girl, the falsity of the Negro incantation at a climactic moment, and the un-American style of the broadcasting, which sounds far more like the BBC than the NBC.

There are larger issues for argument than these, however, in this richly provocative book. Should the author perpetuate, for example, the cliché that America is beautiful and innocent, ignorant and gallant, material and generous? Does mere age insure wisdom? And must one be bombed one's self to share its horror? Surely all genuine writing, if it has any use at all, is meant to impart to the mind and spirit of human beings the deep, infinitely varied experience of many lives and ways of thinking, living, loving, and dying. And, finally, at a moment when Guadalcanal is teaching us something more than geography, is it true that America learns nothing and forgets everything?



**V. Sackville-West looks back from 1945 upon an America that was tempted by a compromise peace.**

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# Above the Unfortified Border

*CANADA, TODAY AND TOMORROW. By William Henry Chamberlin. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.* 1942. 338 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HOWARD P. WHIDDEN, JR.

THE prospective reader of this timely book should not be misled by its title. There is something in it of Canada's past, much of the present, but almost nothing of the future. This is, perhaps, as it should be, since Mr. Chamberlin gains a sure touch only when he ceases to be historian and becomes observer, and loses it when he turns prophet. His first chapter on Canadian history and his last on what is to come are uninspired. But in the main body of the book he has given, on the whole, an excellent account of present-day Canada. The physical environment, the people, the economy, and the war effort are all dealt with more than adequately. If there is neither the deep insight nor the provocative approach of John MacCormac's "Canada, America's Problem," there is a more complete and rounded picture of our northern neighbor. Especially valuable is the story of Canada's rapidly expanding war effort.

Mr. Chamberlin, however, is reluctant to face certain disagreeable facts about Canada. He is much too gentle with the tiny but dangerous minority of proto-fascists in Quebec and also with the die-hard Orangemen in Ontario. Since this will displease both camps as much as if he had dealt frankly with each, how much better to have been frank! As to the French Canadians as a whole, he presents a sympathetic picture of the unique civilization which they have created on the banks of the St. Lawrence. But it is surely a little fatuous to say that their emphatic repudiation of conscription is "a racial instinct, perhaps a peasant instinct." Indeed, in his handling of the whole conscription issue, Mr. Chamberlin pulls his punches to such an extent that his explanations and apologies become rather tedious. The same hesitancy marks his discussion of Canada's foreign policy in the interwar years. If, as an American, he feared to offend our Canadian friends, he should have taken courage from the frank criticism so frequently, and usually justly, made of American policy by Canadians. The unreality of Canada's attitude between 1919 and 1939 is too clear to be ignored, and certainly not to be explained by a passing and distinctly unhappy comparison between Mackenzie King and Premier Daladier of France. Mr. Chamberlin's hesitancy disappears, however, as he briefly contemplates the future, and he permits himself the following speculation. "Should there be a British defeat or a compromise peace which would leave Great Britain weakened in stature as a great power, the force of circumstances, always much stronger than mere theoretical propaganda, might well force Canada and the United States into some kind of North American coalition." When the security of both these nations is so obviously bound up with total victory over the Axis, it is difficult to account for such a statement.

But if these shortcomings be excepted, as well as several omissions such as the failure to mention the tremendous oil resources of the Canadian Northwest, this book can be recommended to all who wish an extremely readable account of Canada today. It is not history at its best, but it is good journalism, and probably that is all the author intended it to be.

**William Henry Chamberlin**

# The Authoritarian Regime in Brazil

*BRAZIL UNDER VARGAS. By Karl Loewenstein. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1942. 381 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by C. A. HUTCHINSON

WHEN Brazil declared war on Germany and Italy on August 22nd this year, the United Nations welcomed to their rank a state whose government could under no circumstances be called democratic. Those who know Brazil well, however, have long been emphatic that life there is quite distinct from the state controlled existence favored by orthodox totalitarian regimes in Europe. Although this difficulty of classifying the Vargas regime under existing patterns has long been admitted, no serious attempt to make an objective study of the constitutional basis and practical application of the doctrines of the government has been made until now.

Professor Loewenstein has made it his work to analyze the Vargas regime by examining its constitution and laws and their effect in practice on the life of the Brazilian people. His study is both thorough and impartial and, furthermore, it is undertaken with an obvious feeling of sympathy.

In tracing the background for the Vargas government, which came into power in 1934, the author points out that it "considers itself as the legitimate successor of the Empire," with all the latter's traditions of "central administration, dignity and appreciation of cultural values." From the beginning there is no doubt about the dictatorial character of the regime. Getulio Vargas "is factually President for life and he rules and governs without constitutional limitations whatever." But differences between the government in Brazil and that, say, in Germany immediately strike the observer. In Brazil there is no Fuehrer principle "with its regimentation and automatism." Nor is Brazil a single party state "but a non party state." Furthermore, the regimentation of social life implicit in European totalitarian regimes is "wholly alien to the liberal and individualistic temperament of the Brazilians."

It might well be asked, since the Brazilian people "are intrinsically liberal; their social habits . . . thoroughly democratic," how they submit to what is, after all, a very successful dictatorship.

After some very interesting chapters on Brazil's methods of dealing with the problems of Axis intrigue in the country, including the question of the Germans of South Brazil, the author comes to his conclusion that the Vargas regime is neither democratic nor totalitarian but authoritarian. He distinguishes between these by saying that authoritarian refers to the form of government, whereas totalitarian embraces a whole way of life.

"Brazil under Vargas" is an essential book for all who would seek to understand this great Republic to the South, and now that we are comrades in arms it is more than ever imperative that we do understand her.



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# Great Britain in Midpassage

*ZONES OF INTERNATIONAL FRICTION, The Great Lakes Frontier, Canada, The West Indies, India, 1748-1754. By Lawrence Henry Gipson, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.* 1942. 352 *pp.* (*Index lix*). $5.

Reviewed by JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

THIS book, with its somewhat lengthy title, is the fifth volume of Professor Gipson's scholarly and monumental history of "The British Empire Before the Revolution" which is still in progress. I presume, although I do not know, that the author will bring his work down to the end of the Revolution and the treaty acknowledging the independence of the United States from the Empire in 1783. In that case there are still about thirty years to be covered, and as this volume spans only six, it may be considered that there are several more to come. That Dr. Gipson, well known as the head of the Department of History and Government at Lehigh University, and the author of many important works, should have been able to plan and continue the production of such a huge undertaking in these days of world turmoil is an achievement in itself.

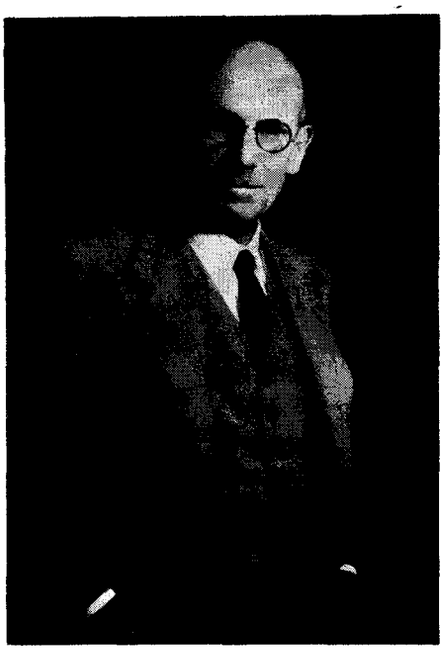
This series, as its name properly indicates, is in no sense a mere study of Anglo-American imperial relations but the story of the growth of the British Empire in all parts of the world. Volume V, however, is of especial interest to Americans as dealing in the main with imperial affairs and problems, in the period covered, in our own hemisphere. Spain, even though retaining possessions in the New World, had largely ceased to dispute claims for imperial extension, and the eighteenth century was witnessing the great duel between France and Britain. The zones of friction were therefore those in which those two nations adjoining or overlapped each other in their colonial expansion—the American continent, the West Indies, and India.

India receives its share of attention, and as far as I can judge, the account of it is sound and accurate. I know well from experience that the complex story of Europe in India is one of the most difficult an American historian can tackle, just as the India of today is the most difficult political problem which any nation has ever been called on to solve, even though the members of a woman's club who listen to a Hindu talk for an hour may believe they know all about it.

This is not the place to point out that the Hindus, even though in a majority, cannot speak for all "India" with its hundreds of races and languages, its many religions, its six hundred or so states and its several thousand castes, and that if Hindus are "Indians," all "Indians" are not Hindus. Professor Gipson throws some light on the situation, and it is one that most certainly at this moment calls for more light and less heat.

However, as I said, this volume will probably interest most Americans more for its treatment of history in our own part of the world. Obviously, as covering only a six year segment of a complicated story extending over several centuries, it is largely a work for the scholar, but it can be recommended not only to such but to the public generally as sound and balanced. In the treatment of some topics it will give even the scholar better fare than he has ever had before. This is notably true of the more than fifty pages devoted to the Albany Conference of 1754, every one of which I have read with the greatest care and admiration. Other passages are also very good, such as those devoted to early Canada and to Acadia, though more might be mentioned.

It is always possible to point to what a reviewer may consider flaws or minor errors. For example, in the description of Canada other readers as well as myself may be puzzled by old French law terms which are not sufficiently explained. To say, for example, that in general the land was held *en censive,* (and many other words on pages 8 and 9), leaves one guessing. Again, one wonders why the author says scarcely anything about the return of Louisbourg to the French by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. I once went through some 20,000 manuscript pages of the Newcastle Papers to find out about it, and perhaps the labor involved has given me an exaggerated idea of the importance of the incident, but I think it *was* important for its effect on New England particularly. Professor Gipson who is probably far more familiar than I am with the Newcastle and other papers regarding it could have told a more complete story than I did. However, these are details, and the author is to be congratulated on maintaining the high quality of his undertaking in a time when it must be unusually difficult to do so. I may merely add that the index, always an extremely important part of any serious work, is unusually good and full.



**Lawrence Henry Gipson continues his history of the British Empire before American independence.**

# A Matter of Fact

## FOR LOUIS UNTERMEYER

**By Dilys Bennett Laing**

"WHAT do you know about the Tamarack?"
You asked the question apropos of nothing.
"The Tamarack," I answered, "sheds its needles
although it poses as an evergreen."
You seemed so pleased by such a simple answer.
I asked you why. You said: "That is a fact
solid and bright to cling to when the world
breaks in your fingers. That, or any fact,
is something certain for the mind to clutch
and cling to through disaster." When my walls
shatter about me, I shall think of you
thinking of facts as though they were salvation,
and of the Tamarack that drops its leaves.



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## TIME NEEDED

SUNSHINE in Trafalgar Square and fluttering hordes of pigeons, soldiers of the far-flung British dominions feeding them and sturdy English lasses sauntering along in the bright warmth of a Fall day, their arms twined about the waists of American lads in uniform. So a returned traveller described the scene on a recent Sunday morning in London. An idyllic picture in spite of war's alarms, but alas, there's a worm in the bud. For between the armed men of Great Britain and our own there seems to be sporadic friction, little ill-wills generated by the tactlessness of the latter in flaunting indulgences made possible as the result of larger pay than is the lot of the British, heartburning aroused by seemingly fickle English maidens who bestow their attentions on the strangers instead of on their own countrymen.

The trouble, of course, goes deeper than these surface manifestations—there was friction between the soldiers of the two great Anglo-Saxon nations in the last war, too—and doubtless has its roots, anomalously enough, in the very kinship of tradition and language which at first blush would seem to be unifying factors. There is no misunderstanding so great as that between those who think that they think alike. British and Americans are bound in a family relationship which superficially bespeaks similarity of reaction and points of view. In principle, on the great issues of the liberty of the individual, religious tolerance, representative government, they believe alike, and believe alike with a profoundness of conviction that twice within the lifetime of a generation has made them brothers in arms. But in small habits of life, in customs, even sometimes in manners they diverge so radically, even though at the same time occasionally so subtly, that, starting at the same point, they may come out at surprisingly disparate ways of procedure.

When a people speaks a different language from another, and differs radically from it in conventions and taboos, members of both groups take the divergences for granted and make allowance for what they fail to comprehend or approve. But when, like the British and Americans, they believe they understand each other and then find themselves at odds in their reactions, they become inevitably irritated, angered, bellicose. The cure for such ill-feeling as propinquity between Great Britain's soldiers and our own may have caused is homeopathic—more propinquity. The admiration of the British and American hosts for each other as fighting men is admitted; closer acquaintance of each with the other should bring understanding of national idiosyncracies which differentiate but need in no way divide the soldiers of the two nations.

THE radio put on the other day a presentation of the tragedy of Lidice which had the benefit of every technical device which could give force to an impassioned narrative in verse by one of the foremost of American poets. One of our leading dramatists is filling the theatre at present with a play which takes for its theme the heroic resistance of the soldiers in Bataan. Novels galore have portrayed the hideous sufferings imposed by Nazi tyranny on innocent individuals and the noble resignation of exiles who have been forced to begin life over in middle age bereft of all that had made existence desirable. Poetry, drama, fiction alike would all seem to show again that great literature is not produced in the heat of conflict but in the perspective of time. The artist is waging a losing fight from the beginning who hopes in the midst of reality to depict events so that their magnitude takes on proper stature. The facts are more dramatic than any arrangement of them into a tapestry of art can be: the emotions evoked by them at the moment of their happening more intense than their projection in literature while their actual impact is still fresh in memory can hope to be. Some day, some score or more of years after peace has been proclaimed, there may come along a writer who, meditating upon the terrible and portentous events of our day, will be able to fuse them into a work which will depict the present struggle and its various incidents as a phase in the tragic and majestic march of human history. But the time is not yet. A. L.

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# Geneva: 1942

By E. D. Vaughan

I MET a man with face of pity
Walking about this wasted city
With the awkward step of one long dead.
He turned to me and he softly said:

"What does it mean, the guns, the roar?
Where have I heard it all before?
Why are they fighting? It almost seems
Like the very worst of my troubled dreams."

"Peace, old man: let the young men die;
They're nothing to you at all," said I.

"Nothing at all? I remember though
A distant day when it was not so,
When each dead man had died in me
Who died too soon and could not see
That I fought for peace in a battle bolder
Than war itself, and I bent my shoulder
Under the welcome, the destined, weight
Of a perfect league . . . that came too late."

"Too late, too early, it matters not,"
Said I, "When the whole damn world is shot
To hell, and the few remaining pieces
Will be blown to bits before it ceases.
Not a thing can you do, not a soul can you save,
So go back to your narrow, your restless grave.
And never remember. And never boast."
Said I to Woodrow Wilson's ghost.



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## A Name for the War

SIR:—I have studied the various names suggested for the current war. The War for Freedom is a stirring but trite title and has been fought in many countries in many times. Under the same category would fall The War of Resurrection, The War of Restoration, The War of Liberty, and The War of Brotherhood.

The War for Survival I consider to be lacking in the expansiveness of positive vision. The People's War, Everyman's War, The Common War, and Humanity's War I find to be well-rounded but undistinguished, a forest without a tree. The Air War, The Bomber War, The Ether War, and The Wing War are less social and humane than mechanical in their implications. The Planetary War, The Cosmic War, The Universal War, The Global War, The Total War, and The Final War are somewhat grotesque and grandiose.

The War of Interdependence is sane and scholarly but not readily adapted to popularization in the mind of man; it is not the phrase of a poet-leader who would include not only comprehension of the material but vitalization of the spirit as well. The Democratic War is partial to the limited world of ideology. The Melungeon War, hitherto unsubmitted, is a musical name, meaning medley of human blood, mixture of all races, red, black, yellow, and white, a striving toward the composite culture of the common man. But it is perhaps too precious and obscure to be sloganized in time of war. How about, then, The Nameless War?

No, there is one more, the true one, the one of last and irresistible resort, simply The World Order War. This label of destiny, permeated with thought as well as with action, is conscientiously opposed to The Second World War or The New Order War. In it the spirit of humanity is made to realize that there is dignity in all peoples, that this is a battle for racial equality, adequate resources for every nation, universal brotherhood: the long-awaited evolution of that sacred splendor, the mind of man, the balance between lust and reason.

JAMES STOKELY.

Newport, Tenn.

## Yes, Twain Knew Whitman

SIR:—"Did Twain Know Whitman?" asks Mr. Cyril Clemens.

Well, you will find in Traubel's work, a reference to S. L. C. on page 299 of Vol. 2 where, along with a considerable group headed by the newspaper man, Sylvester Baxter, he helped make up a fund for buying a house for the poet. It was called "The Boston Cottage Fund." Whitman was deeply moved by that act of group generosity.

Also, in the recent book by my friend Miss Frances Winwar, by far the best of the recent books on Whitman, you will find two references to Mark Twain one of them bearing on the immediate Whitman history. He helped, along with Whittier and others, buy that famous horse and buggy, for the poet. And of course, you know of the unfortunate publishing house which Mark Twain helped finance, (Chas. L. Webster & Co.) which published, in 1892, "Selected Poems" by Whitman.—According to E. C. Stedman, this was the first of the American "selected" poems from Leaves of Grass, apparently "selected" to give emphasis to the nature themes, and in the editor's preface (unsigned) the manner of its writing leads me to believe it *might* have been written by Mark Twain himself. At any rate, since no "authority" has ever denied this belief of mine, I choose to believe it until the actual author of it is known! So, it seems fairly obvious that your query can be answered, YES.

JOHN G. MOORE.

Hollywood, Calif.

"I guess Autumn is really here—the leaves are falling from the garden books."

## L'Affair Shearing

SIR:—Joseph Shearing, it has been officially announced, is the fifth pseudonym of Mrs. Gabrielle Margaret Vere Campbell Long, a conclusion at which your correspondent arrived more than a year ago (*SRL* July, 1941). His conclusions were based chiefly on Mrs. Long's autobiography, "'The Debate Continues,' by Margaret Campbell, being the Autobiography of Marjorie Bowen" (London and Toronto, 1939). Marjorie Bowen is made up of a prettification, which Mrs. Long doesn't like, of one of her first names, and her mother's maiden name. Her other pseudonyms are George Preedy (remember John Barrymore in "General Crack"?), Edgar Winch, and Robert Paye. In "Another Part of the Forest," the second volume of G. B. Stern's autobiography, Miss Stern remarks that she had "especially relished the (somewhat dissimilar) autobiographies of Marjorie Bowen, stamped with black bitter sorrow, and several joyous Mr. Agates." No reader of this remarkable book could doubt that Mrs. Long had both the ability and the background to write the macabre romances of Joseph Shearing, nor be surprised that the Shearing books have been far and away the most distinguished work she has ever done.

EARLE F. WALBRIDGE

New York, N. Y.

## Ditto on B. C.

SIR:—Since Dale Warren wrote to tell you how much he liked Bennett Cerf's column, I feel impelled to do likewise.

As a busy reviewer and lecturer, I had almost let my subscription to *S.R.L.* lapse. I missed Christopher Morley and found most of your reviews appeared too late to interest me.

But after reading a few of Mr. Cerf's breezy articles, I found him reason enough for re-subscribing, and his page is the first thing I read as I open the paper.

This week I experienced a stab of regret when I found no "Trade Winds" on the back page—only to be delighted to encounter the double spread inside! I do hope he'll get many more.

EDITH BONNEY FRANKLIN.

Overbrook, Philadelphia.



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# TRADE Winds

**WE WERE ATTRACTED TO DAWN** Powell's new novel, "A Time to Be Born," by the widely circulated rumor that it was at least suggested by the career of Clare Boothe Luce. After fifty pages made it obvious that Amanda Keeler was more a take-off on Lucrezia Borgia than Clare Boothe —a dead ringer, in fact, for one of the hair-raising females whipped up by Miss Boothe herself when she wrote "The Women"—we read "A Time to Be Born" through for sheer amusement. Miss Powell's wit is caustic and knowing, and although her book shows signs of tumbling about her ears in the last hundred pages, she comes through at the end with the best thing of its kind since Tess Slesinger's "The Unpossessed."

Not one major critic mentioned the Clare Boothe angle in his review of the Powell book, although it was the talk of literary circles for weeks. (*Time's* review dismissed it as a "feast of peanut brittle.") We were intrigued into making discreet inquiry. "Were you afraid of the big, bad Luces?" we jibed. "Not afraid," was the sensible reply. "But why take a chance of offending people like that? They may offer me a job some time!" Working for *Time, Life,* or *Fortune* is a lucrative and often wildly exciting occupation these days. The daily round is so hectic that lots of the boys wind up with ulcers. Others, modest enough in their youth, have now been so carried away by their own importance that it would take three long-range bombers to bring them back. If we were on the threshold of a journalistic career, however, we think we'd rather have a job with Mr. Luce than anything else in the world.

Miss Boothe herself, meanwhile, is making quite a run of it up in Connecticut for a seat in Congress. Her speeches are particularly refreshing in contrast to the usual routine of piffling campaign eloquence. And whether she is elected on Tuesday or not, you can bet that unlike Dawn Powell's Amanda Keeler, she is writing her own copy. . . .

**M. F. ASHLEY MONTAGU'S LATEST** book, "Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race," includes the story of the wife of a Worcester Cathedral Canon who listened to the first announcement of the theory of evolution with consternation. "Descended from the apes!" she exclaimed. "My dear, we will hope it is not true. But if it is, let us pray that it may not become generally known!" The Montagu book is a Columbia University Press publication. If you wonder why we mention books from this particular press so frequently in "Trade Winds," the explanation resides solely in the ample person of Donald Geddes, who handles its publicity. His sheet, "The Pleasures of Publishing," is the quintessence of refined wit and understanding. To any one of a half dozen leading trade publishers who come to mind, Geddes would be worth his weight in new tires. To one frayed institution in particular, whose current so-called news notes consist principally of preposterous lies about advertising appropriations and numbers of printings, he would be worth the weight of the whole University.

(P.S.—Just as we were looking over the galley proofs of this item, Bob De Graff phoned to tell us that Donald Geddes had joined the staff of Pocket Books. As indicated above, we think Pocket Books has made a ten-strike.) . . .

**OUR TOWN BOASTS ANOTHER PUB**lisher—one of the very best—whose passion for changing his entire accounting system every six months or so upsets nobody but the luckless wights who keep his books for him. He is convinced that the F.B.I., the Interstate Commerce Commission, and sundry other government agencies have a corps of operatives constantly poised to descend upon his premises and examine every record he has kept since Teddy Roosevelt's charge up San Juan Hill. In the past three years he has changed his system to conform in turn with those of Standard Brands, Sears, Roebuck, Bethlehem Steel, and the United States Mint. The other day a Standard of New Jersey man arrived for a luncheon appointment, and the head accountant blanched with terror. "Hold your hats, boys," he groaned, "here we go again!" The accountant told us of a dream he had had the night before. "I dreamed that Mr.—— had gone to meet his Maker. They were carrying the casket down the steps of the church, when suddenly the lid popped open, and he sat upright to explain, 'If you'd put this casket on wheels, you could lay off four men'!" . . .

**BILL SAROYAN, FRESNO'S GIFT TO** George Jean Nathan, has been inducted into the Army. His latest one-

# *Your Literary I. Q.*

**By Howard Collins**

FAMILIAR LINES OF FAMOUS POEMS

Quoted below are the first two words of twenty-five familiar lines of poetry. Can you complete them? Allowing two points for each line you can complete and two more if you can name the author, a score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 21.

1. Ah, make .....
2. Behind him .....
3. Blessings on .....
4. Breathes there .....
5. Bright star! .....
6. Come live .....
7. Descend, ye .....
8. Far from .....
9. Flow gently .....
10. Full fathom .....
11. Great rats .....
12. How doth .....
13. In Xanadu .....
14. I wandered .....
15. Little Lamb .....
16. My strength .....
17. Once upon .....
18. O wild .....
19. She walks .....
20. The blessed .....
21. 'Twas brillig .....
22. 'Twas many .....
23. Whan that .....
24. When lilacs .....
25. With fingers .....



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act play, "Hello Out There," won generous plaudits from the critics, and proved once more that when he isn't clowning he is one of the really important writers in America today . . . When Dorothy Parker and Robert Benchley set about collaborating on a play, they planned to use the pen name of "Park Bench." . . . Carolyn Coggins, who attends at least six cocktail parties a week, was bored to death at one of them by a toothless wolf who would not quit her side. Finally he asked, "At least tell me this: who's driving you home?" "You are," answered Carolyn—and departed. . . . Wise words in Farrar and Rinehart's Fall catalogue: "As publishers we shall make our own mistakes but we define our job, as we see it, to further by every word we publish the total and complete defeat of our enemies and the building of a future in which no such enemies can ever again exist. There is no other concern for any of us, no concern at all." . . .

**IF YOU WERE ASKED TO GUESS WHAT** three magazines were the top sellers in an army encampment for a single month, what would your answer be? Jot down your selections before you continue with this item. We saw a detailed report from all the post exchanges in one of the biggest Southern bases for September and the three leaders, in the order named, were *Reader's Digest, Superman Comics,* and *Life.* None of the others was even close. Does this change your notion of what boys in the service like to read? . . .

Speaking of the *Reader's Digest,* its head, DeWitt Wallace, was lunching with Carl Carmer recently. Carmer had several notions for a *Digest* piece, but none of them struck Wallace's fancy. Finally he remembered a little ghost story that his wife had told him years before. Wallace loved it. In fact, he bought it on the spot. Carmer rushed home to his wife to spill the good news and concluded, "Darn it all, why don't you tell me more of the little things that run around inside of your head?" "Hmph," said Mrs. Carmer. "This will teach you to listen to me after this when I'm talking to you!" . . .

**"WAR AND PEACE" IS NOT THE ONLY** book that proves the contention that all really great books are timeless. On next to the last page of the Modern Library edition of E. M. Forster's superb novel, "A Passage to India," for instance, there is a paragraph whose relevance to the present day is extraordinary. Aziz, the Indian Nationalist, is speaking. "Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons," he cries. "We wanted to know you ten years back, but now it's too late. If we see you today and sit on your committees, it's for political reasons, don't you make any mistake. Why are we put to so much suffering? We used to blame you, now we blame ourselves, we grow wiser. Until England is in difficulty we keep silent, but in the next European war—aha, aha! Then is our time!" The Englishman hears him out, but jeers, "Who do you want instead of the English? The Japanese?"

"A Passage to India" was written in 1924. . . .

**"Gosh, with all that's goin' on in the world, I shore wisht I knowed how to read."**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS** is about to publish two new Japanese-English dictionaries, one of them devoted exclusively to sea terms. Samuel Farquhar, of the Press, writes: "I do not think it is a military secret that the Navy is buying very large quantities of both." . . . The Literary Guild choice for December is a new novel by Ben Ames Williams called "Time of Peace." Back in 1929 this same Mr. Williams wrote a book called "Meat" that is, in the opinion of this writer, one of the finest and least appreciated American novels of the past twenty years . . . Tom Coward, reputed to have won a small fortune on the New York Giants this year, is blowing some of it in on "A Treasury of British Humor," which will include selections from Chaucer and Shakespeare to Saki and Angela Thirkell. It is a companion volume to the Whites' "Sub-Treasury of American Humor," which was a honey. . . .

**ONE OF OUR BOOKBINDERS HAS A** clerk who reported a painful domestic incident last week. He arrived home very late for dinner and explained to his irate wife: "I had to wait for mine boss." "You mean to standing dere and tallink me you are making a pal out of dot dirty keppitalist?" she cried. "You and him is going hum togadder now?" "Who's tukking about keppitalists?" groaned the clerk. "I had to wait for de crosstown boss!"

BENNETT CERF.

**SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 448)**

HAWTHORNE:
*AMERICAN NOTE-BOOKS*

These four black swine lie, the very symbols of slothful . . . comfort. There is something deeply and indefinably interesting in the swinish race. They care not for man and will not adapt themselves to his notions as other beasts do.



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# Clio and My Aunt Bertha

LT.-COL. JOHN T. WINTERICH

I GREATLY doubt if my Aunt Bertha has ever heard of Clio, that one among the muses who, "singing of famous deeds," in the words of Ausonius, "restores the past to life." Aunt Bertha was born in La Grange, Georgia, on March 2, 1857. Her father was a Rhenish Prussian fresco painter who had left home following the yeast and seethe of '48 and had found in America not only freedom of soul and speech but also a gentle and comely Würtemberg girl whom he speedily married. This worthy couple became my paternal grandparents, a fact of no interest to Clio but of considerable moment to Aunt Bertha and me. The gentle and comely Würtemberger lived into my time—a plump little creature with dark gray hair parted squarely in the middle and combed severely down at the sides. If she ever sat otherwise than with her hands folded austerely in her lap (taken with the even part in her hair, this posture gave her the conventionalized symmetry of an Egyptian figurine), I do not remember it. After fifty years of life in the States, Confederate and United, she still had a strong German accent, but one rarely heard it, because she spoke little. She had left her husband in a Southern grave two years after Appomattox. He was in his thirty-ninth year.

My father, in that distant time, was little more than two years old. Aunt Bertha was almost ten. She represents, therefore, the only vocal link existing between my grandfather and me. Aunt Bertha takes after her father, I am sure, in more ways than one. She is five feet nine and straight as a guardsman. She is forthright, downright, and upright. So, I am certain, was he.

I was much older than I should have been before it occurred to me that Aunt Bertha was what the historians, the godsons of Clio, denominate a primary source. It had been interesting to listen to her fragmentary and casual recollections of a grandparent who had left the world twenty-four years before I entered it—to speculate therefrom if, and in what ways, I might have drawn anything from his character across the interval of a generation, something for the transfer of which my father stood, as it were, in the office of trustee. Aunt Bertha could be of little help here—Solomon could have been of no more. And then, as I say, it occurred to me that Aunt Bertha was something more than an aunt—she was an alert, observing, ratiocinating entity whose childhood had lain in a momentous epoch and in a spot of earth charged with emotion and conflict.

I do not altogether do myself justice when I intimate that this flagrantly obvious conclusion came to me with the blast of inspiration. One of Aunt Bertha's earliest recollections (and the very first I can recall her imparting to me) had been so palpably adulterate that I decided that anything out of her memoirs must be suspect. At the age of four or so, she insists, she was chased by a hoopsnake. It is the fashion of the hoopsnake to stick his tail into his mouth, convert himself into a sort of bicycle tire, roll straight and true at his victim, and transfix him with his tail (which is hard and pointed).

Now the hoopsnake, in sober herpetology, simply does not exist. Aunt Bertha's loyal adherence to the hoopsnake *mythos* long vitiated my faith in the validity of her memory—of her capacity to sing, like Clio, of famous deeds and to restore the past to life. (I had forgotten that Herodotus, the very father of history, told much worse whoppers, and Heaven knows *he* had Clio's blessing.) Two subsequent incidents, however, revitalized my faith.

First was the case of Uncle Steve. Uncle Steve was my grandfather's slave. Aunt Bertha (in my childhood she was brown-haired, brown-eyed, and handsome; at eighty-four she is still brown-eyed and handsome) never mentioned Uncle Steve until a few years ago. That was my fault. A native of Connecticut, and reared while the Grand Army of the Republic was slipping noiselessly away from perihelion, I never appreciated (and would not have dared appreciate openly if I had thought of it) my authentic if somewhat remote Southern background. I had voted for a President of the United States (a native Virginian, and he was twice elected) before I set foot on soil more austral than New York's Battery Park. But as the Civil, or Between the States, War slid into historical perspective, the Lost Cause (which has won in all the novels) took on a roseate patina, and it became ineffably respectable, even well north of the Battery, to have Southern blood, Southern connections, a Southern accent. And to be able to say that one's forebears had owned slaves—

So I asked Aunt Bertha if her father had owned slaves.

"We had one," she said. "Uncle Steve. He ate as well as the rest of us."

"Are you sure you had just the one?"

"Only Uncle Steve."

THIS was patently the truth, but, like so much truth, it was also gall and wormwood. One cannot go about proclaiming that one's grandfather owned A Slave. Does one boast of an unique glove, a solitary earring, a widowed andiron, an odd volume of Gibbon? I tried vainly to detach Aunt Bertha from this ridiculous and equivocal position.

"Sometimes a slave was parcelled out among several families, wasn't he, just as farmers combine to buy a tractor, or commuters a power lawnmower? Didn't grandfather own even a fractional interest in some slave besides Uncle Steve?"

"No," Aunt Bertha replied, "we only had Uncle Steve."

This was a devastating disappointment. But the incident established Aunt Bertha as a competent witness, and more than atoned for the hoopsnake.

The episode of the Confederate general strengthened Aunt Bertha's credibility immeasurably—nay, so far as I was concerned, perfected it. I had asked her idly if she had ever seen

(*Continued on page* 20)

—*Woodcut by Clare Leighton, from "Under the Greenwood Tree."*



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# Davenport . . .

*THE VALLEY OF DECISION. By Marcia Davenport. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1942. 790 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BESS JONES

THOUGH technically unified by the story of Mary Rafferty, the little Irish maid who in 1873 entered the wealthy household of the Pittsburgh ironmaster William Scott and who eventually became its spiritual head, this long chronicle of four generations tells much more than the life and love of a single woman. It is a cavalcade of America, industrially, socially, and domestically, and in its awareness of the elements that have entered into the making of a substantial middle-class society, in its warmly liberal, yet firmly and intelligently held, attitude toward those elements it is one of the most satisfactory books to appear in some time. To be sure, it has faults. Its length could have been reduced by the omission of details or incidents too fully developed for the nicest proportions, its earnestness goes almost unrelieved by humor or laughter, and the relentless march of time and the generations tends to stride unheedingly over the bodies of individual characters. Its scope is such, however, that weaknesses which would ruin a less expansive performance are here reduced merely to matters for mild regret.

Mrs. Davenport has marked off her narrative into three main periods: 1873-84, 1889-1929, 1933-41. She calls them the book of William, the book of Paul, and the book of Claire. William was the founder of the family, the man who made the iron, who marched with American industrial progress following the Civil War, always conservatively, always with integrity. He scorned the opportunists, the speculators, the grabbers, and the exploiters. To these sound principles his second son Paul added modern science and a more enlightened view of labor. It remained for Claire, great-granddaughter of William, to rescue the family enterprise from those enemies within who would despoil its tradition and, in so doing, betray what was most truly American. But the vision that made possible the survival of the Scott heritage, and the Scotts's great place in a new and terrible world came not from a Scott, but from a Rafferty, daughter of a submerged Irish immigrant.

Claire saw all along, more clearly than the Scotts themselves, what they represented. She saw in Paul, the man she loved and cared for until his death, the symbol of America, and she was fanatically determined, even to the sacrifice of her own personal happiness, that it should remain intact. That was her particular vocation, to which she dedicated herself with no less fervor than if she had taken her vows to the Church.

The saga of the American business or industrial dynasty, however familiar and however similar in pattern, is of endless interest because of its endlessly varied emphasis. It may dramatize a struggle for mastery between titans, between ownership and labor, between the native and the foreigner. It may resolve the clash by love, shift in economic status, religion, or natural catastrophe. It may sing the song of American power, of American prodigality, of American egocentricity. At its best, wherever the stress, it will add the saving sense of irony that questions not only America, but the world and life itself.

—*Maurice Goldberg*

**Marcia Davenport**

**Susan Glaspell**

Mrs. Davenport has strength, high purpose, imagination, and an abundance of information about her material. Despite its length, the narrative moves swiftly, and in some portions reveals a practised hand at compression. Indeed, Mrs. Davenport seems to have everything but irony.

# Glaspell . . .

*NORMA ASHE. By Susan Glaspell. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.* 1942. 349 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by H. M. JAMES

MISS GLASPELL'S novels have not always been entirely successful, but she has the distinction of never having perpetrated a cheap or trivial book. Indeed, the very loftiness of her purpose has sometimes been the cause of her failure. For though a novel may, in idealism, tower like a castle above the low-pitched roofs of mass literary building, idealism without firm structure and adequate covering for its framework will topple dustily on its warder's head. In "Norma Ashe," Miss Glaspell has unfortunately leaned too much on the exalted mood and not enough on the downright necessity for making her story wholly credible.

At the opening of the novel Norma, a widow and mother of two feckless children, finds herself involved in the sordid details of running a broken-down boarding house for run-down people. Something happens to make her question her situation, to ask herself why the brave hopes of her inspired girlhood have all been defeated, to retrace her steps so that she might find at what point she had surrendered them. At the center of her thinking stands her college teacher, who had selected her and four other disciples to carry on where he had been forced to stop. He had had a vision of what the world might become through these five, chosen because, among all his pupils, they had seemed to him worthy of fulfilling his dream. They were to enlighten, lead, and re-create the world of men. All five failed him in their special ways, and, failing him, failed themselves. Only Norma sees the enormity of that failure and attempts to retrieve it while there is still time.

As a fable of spiritual upheaval and return to ultimate values, the story of this exquisitely sensitive woman has pointed reference to our own time and the need to search our own souls. As a piece of creative writing it regrettably lacks substance and reality.

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A new ruling by Germany for prisoners' camps confiscates books by the following authors: André Maurois, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Louis Bromfield, A. Conan Doyle, Siegfried Sassoon, Louis Golding, Vicki Baum, Susan Ertz, Naomi Jacob, Stephen Zweig, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Rosamund Lehmann, Theodore Dreiser, Georgette Heyer, Sydney Horler, Francis Beeding, Frank Swinnerton, Gilbert Frankau, Sinclair Lewis, H. G. Wells, P. Guedalla, Duff Cooper, L. Hogben.



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# Thirkell . . .

*MARLING HALL. By Angela Thirkell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.* 1942. 319 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LEO LERMAN

THIS is the third of Mrs. Thirkell's war novels, and it is her most blatantly satiric, her most fantastically amusing. Here, as in all of her novels, the plot is slight but the characters numerous and the incidents many. Mrs. Thirkell has never before displayed, to such advantage, her ability to dissect the casual gesture and the personal idiosyncracy. A genteel but none too gentle hand wields her acid pen. Her bland and ladylike accents hardly serve to mask her fiendish delight in a "character" whether he be genius or bore. She is engagingly vicious, entrancingly daft, well-bred enough to give a verbal raspberry and make it sound ladylike, and above all things she is English. To a "friendly American publisher" who once told her that her books were "too English," she replied sweetly, "For this there is no remedy as I *am* English."

In "Marling Hall," Mrs. Thirkell presents, dispassionately and with a raffishness unequaled in current literature, the Marlings and other county notabilities; two distinguished literary ladies—one replete with female friend, whisky breath, and books successful because naughty; and a Bloomsbury esthete—"a poet whose poetry is recognized by the people who read it," and who are, of course, confined to his own very select circle. There are also hordes of evacuées—all barbarians, dirty, and unused to the genteel life. There are governesses and Nannies of a most superior breed; schoolmasters and mistresses both angelic and monstrous; demoniacal youngsters; lovers of all ages; scheming minxes; and itinerant Free French as critical of England as the English were of France. I shall not here attempt to summarize Mrs. Thirkell's plot, for whether Miss Harvey gets Oliver Marling or whether Lettice Watson, now a young war-widow, decides to change her name to Leslie or Barclay or back again to Marling is part of "Marling Hall's" general delight, but let it suffice to say that the bishop's experiment is only one of this book's innumerable titillating madnesses.

The Thirkell England at war seems the real England. The Barsetshire men and women may blunder and quarrel. They may maintain class distinctions and talk of the local scarcity of Scotch and sardines more than of the millions of dead and dying. But

**Angela Thirkell can make a verbal raspberry sound ladylike.**

Barsetshire is realistically united against the common foe. Barsetshire is not muddling through—it is pulling through gloriously. Angela Thirkell makes outrageous fun of Barsetshire and of all the English, but she is allowed. She *is* English.

Lucy Marling is a whacking sort of Barsetshire girl. She has a dreadful passion for gore in its less coagulate state and for the more grisly forms of surgery, but she also has a heart and a wealth of good sense. She is always telling everyone "what." And her "what" on Britain and its allies is genuine Thirkelliana. "The Russians weren't exactly our allies, except that us both being attacked by Hitler made us have to pull together, because they certainly wouldn't have done anything for us if Hitler had left them alone," quotes Lucy, "And I think," she continues, "the Chinese are the same. I mean they can't exactly call us allies because we didn't do anything for them until the Japs started fighting us, so we are the kind of allies to them that the Russians are to us."

This is a book to read and re-read with joy and thankfulness. It is a sane book. Perhaps in 1950 when Lady Agnes Graham presents her girls at court, as she is absolutely sure of doing (see page 291), "Marling Hall" will be not only hilarious reading but required reading for all social historians.

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"The Writer in a World at War" will be the theme of eight Round Table Conferences conducted by the Writers Club of Columbia University during the academic year of 1942-43, Professor Donald Lemen Clark announced. Willa Roberts, editor of *The Woman's Home Companion,* will speak on opportunities and responsibilities of the women's magazines in war time on November 4.

# Douglas . . .

*THE ROBE. By Lloyd C. Douglas. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Co.* 1942 695 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

MR. DOUGLAS has labored long and diligently upon one of literature's greatest themes: the crucifixion of Jesus and the birth of Christianity. In one sense this is no new departure for him. Those who have read such of his books as "Magnificent Obsession," "White Banners," or "Green Light," or seen them as screened, will recall how prevalent everywhere in his work is the theme of regeneration through crisis. "The Robe" is only a final and definitive statement of his own magnificent obsession. Here we are in Judea in the days of Pontius Pilate, and behold his uneasy sentence imposed upon a young Jewish prophet who has disturbed the peace of the province. Marcellus Gallio, a Minoan captain, is assigned to carry out the deed, and under his eyes the Galilean is crucified. The Romans cast dice for the robe, and Marcellus wins. Then follows the pattern of regeneration as Douglas has drawn it so many times before. Marcellus is obsessed with remorse. The robe is first a symbol of guilt, so that he fears to see it, then of spiritual rebirth, so that its touch gives him strength and peace again. He seeks out the disciples and becomes himself a devotee of the new Christianity.

Mr. Douglas brings to this historical tale his usual persuasive sincerity and wholeness of heart. He has always been a lay preacher, and this plot offers basis for his best sermon. As a novel it is limited by his personal limitations as a writer. These are considerable. He does not, first, have any power with words; his prose is neither eloquent nor vigorous, but is rather on the flat and frigid side. And he has not mastered the character or the color of the historical period he has unquestionably studied with such thoroughness. The characters of Tiberius and Caligula, of the disciples, of the Jews, Greeks, Romans do not have the authentic time-and-space reality which they have in, to cite two recent writers on the same period, the books of Robert Graves and Sholom Asch. The material gets away from Mr. Douglas, and the book too often seems long and rambling. In attempting this kind of book he is swamping his real literary bent, which is for short, clear, hortatory parable. "The Robe" could easily have been his most brilliant parable, at one fifth its length.



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## THE VALLEY OF DECISION

### by Marcia Davenport

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# The Phoenix Nest

## The Wings of the Morning

WE feel pleased by the fact that our readers are apparently right up on their toes! We miscalled Louis Tracy's "The Wings of the Morning," and have received a flood of letters about it. We had no idea there were so many Tracy fans in the country, but Claude M. Fuess, Headmaster of Phillips Andover, recalls to us that Tracy's title was from Psalm 139, that the book was published in 1903, and that it is "no mere romantic antique, but a tale which can still be read with delight." He suggests for our collection of "island tales" the following: "Foul Play," by Charles Reade; "Orphan Island," by Rose Macaulay, and "The Pines of Lory," by J. A. Mitchell (marooned lovers on an island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence). "And reading 'The Pines of Lory' would inevitably lure anybody to Mitchell's other whimsical books, 'Amos Judd' and 'Villa Claudia,' which the literary world has too willingly let die. Ambitious and not too philological Ph.D.'s could find in these volumes a profitable field of research." We entirely agree! Also, how about Mitchell's "The Last American?" We have often discussed with Harrison Cady, who used to draw for Mitchell on the old *Life*, the merits of that great editor.

The celebrated Bernard DeVoto, known to us as "Benny," is also a Tracy fan. He writes, "It's a swell book, but the title is not 'The Wings of a Dove,' etc." Stanley Kidder Wilson also says "The Wings of the Dove" is by Henry James, but that he "glamorously remembers" the Tracy book. William J. Meikle of Radford, Virginia, has the right answer. Albert Philip Cohen of New York tells us that Tracy's story has become "a minor classic for boys (and confidentially for grown-ups too—I read it when I was grown) and has been reprinted in many editions." He gives us the following Tracy biography:

> Tracy—a prolific writer—was born in 1863, rode the crest of the Lew Wallace, Rafael Sabatini eras with novels like "The Captain of the Kansas," "The Red Year," "The Pillar of Light," "Wreck of the Chinook,"—all best described by a contemporary jacket blurb as "Love, adventure, and plenty of fighting. Tracy at his best!" Before he died in 1928, he tried his hand at detective and mystery stories which are good for Whodunit readers. "The Gleave Mystery" is the best of this lot. Louis Tracy may be known to some of your readers under the name of "Gordon Holmes," a pseudonym briefly used. It was good to see your reference to the era of Horse Hair romanticism!

Kenneth W. Porter of Vassar College, and Helen Bower of the *Detroit Free Press* sent us postals about Tracy. Porter reminds us that both Tracy's and James's titles are scriptural, Ps. 139:9 and 55:6 respectively; Helen Bower recalls that the heroine's name was Iris Anstruther (*All heroines should be named Iris Anstruther!*) and that she and the hero waited in a little cave on the mountain ledge for the Dyaks to shoot poisoned arrows through their blow-pipes; and how they read the psalm about the terror and the arrow! Mrs. William R. Ridington of Westminster, Maryland, and James N. Gibson of Newport, R. I., were also both "on the ball." Mrs. H. C. MacJilton of Baltimore, Maryland, corrects the title we attributed to Norman Lindsay, as not "The Incomplete Amorist" but "The Cautious Amorist." Miss Marie A. Skinner of Montclair, N. J., writes that, as to islands, Miss Blanchard's "Island Love Story" deserves a place, gives us the correct Louis Tracy title, and says if Mr. E. R. Schlesinger will read Longfellow's "The Day is Done," the lines he seeks are the third and fourth of the first stanza. So says also T. L. Bailey of Cleveland, Ohio, and William J. Meikle. The former adds the following titles to the "island books": Sir Thomas More's "Utopia," Norman Douglas's island in "South Wind," Anatole France's "Penguin Island," Dean Swift's flying island of Laputa in "Gulliver's Travels," "The Island of Dr. Moreau," James Whitcomb Riley's "Flying Islands of the Night" with colored illustrations by Franklin Booth, Walter de la Mare's "Desert Islands" with decorations by Rex Whistler—of books devoted to actual islands: Norman Douglas's "Siren Land" and "Summer Islands," William Beebe's "Galapagos, or World's End," Celia Thaxter's exquisite "Among the Isles of Shoals" (on the foundation of which we ourself wrote a short novel last year!), Melville's "Omoo" and "Typee," and Christopher Morley's Bermuda book. In this connection, William J. Meikle has suggested to us some works by C. S. Forester.

## Those Celts Again

Carl John Bostelman asks to be allowed to disagree with our feeling that Arthur Stringer fails to capture the true Celtic spirit in verse. For proof, he quotes the following Stringer lines called "The Celt Speaks." He says Stringer's various volumes of Irish poems have given him his best sense of things Irish, along with the personality in the flesh of Oliver St. John Gogarty. Here speaks Stringer:

Throw me, and yet I stand;
  Chained close, I still walk free,
Since no thrall's link yet spanned
  The elusive soul of me.

Throw me, but to the end
  Some touch of mordant mirth
Shall with disaster blend
  To lift me from the earth.

When Saxon, Briton, Dane
  Bent me with sword and gyve,
I sang, above my slain:
  "Break me, but I survive."

Break me, but from the dust
  Some laughter of the soul
Shall sweeten life's last crust
  And keep my spirit whole.

Michael Odell sends us the following rhyme anent the controversy:

When you intimate Strong is much stronger than Stringer
  We just can't agree any longer;
Your Strong may be swell as an Irish-born singer
  But I still think our Stringer is stronger!

Exit laughing, for after all it's the Irish will have the last word! But also we think that the following reminiscence sent us by the poet, John Gould Fletcher, of Little Rock, Arkansas, will interest you:

> I am glad to hear that my old and good friend, L. A. G. Strong's "Selected Poems" have been published in this country. Strong and I spent part of a summer once within seven or eight miles of each other (I think it was in the summer of 1925) living on the fringe of Dartmoor, in Devonshire—a country which Strong knows as well as his own native Ireland, or as the Isle of Skye in the Hebrides—and walking back and forth across the moorland to visit each other. The excellent poem to which you refer, "Talk at the Inn," refers to one conversation we had that summer, a conversation which Strong has put into dialect.
>
> I think if you will look at the dialect used in "Talk at the Inn"—South Devonshire dialect—you will discover it is the same as that used in "Zeke." . . . Another poem you quote, "The Brewer's Man" is in Dublin Irish. . . .
>
> During the summer I lived on the moor with Strong as my nearest literary neighbor, I wrote several poems about that wild moorland country which I have never published. It is a subject which no American could ever handle fairly. Whether one writes of the moors of Yorkshire, of the grim waste of granite and heather that is Dartmoor, or of Egdon Heath in Dorset, one has to be born among the sights and sounds and people of such strange waste places to know them well enough to write effectively about them.

Incidentally, if George M. Harrington, Jr., who wrote us some time ago, will send us his address, we will answer his letter.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.



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## THE AMERICAN SPIRIT IN WAR

(*Continued from page 4*)

threatening. But Federal agents were skilfully used by Carrington, John P. Sanderson, and other capable Provost Marshals to disrupt the organization; the victories of Grant and Sherman struck it heavy blows; and the collapse of McClellan's candidacy finished it. The fifth column never gained a point of vantage.

Both these books are stirring; both, though in different ways, are encouraging. Mr. Sandburg shows how, when the whole significance of the American experiment was at stake, men and women by millions cheerfully risked all they had—money, homes, loved ones, chances for the future, life itself—for the great cause. Mr. Milton shows that when defeatists and disloyalists tried to betray the republic, they raised forces which blew their foul conspiracies into tatters. Though he does not say so, his book clearly indicates that American soil is barren ground for treasonable schemes. Faith in the destiny of this free republic is too strong to permit sedition to gain any real foothold.

After the Revolution most Americans thought that, secure in their independence and with a continent for expansion, they would never again have to fight a really desperate and exhausting war. After 1865 most Americans thought that, with national unity attained and two wide oceans to protect us, another fearful conflict was impossible. Why should we be less willing than they to give, not merely till it hurts but till the strain and anguish seem almost unbearable, for the triumph—on a world theatre—of our principles and ideals? It would do many Americans good to remind themselves that during the Revolution pitched battles were fought in every State, wide areas were ravaged in every section, and all society was turned topsy-turvy before victory was gained. It would do them good to remember that in the Civil War both sections were drenched in blood, and one was completely devastated, in a contest of ideas and ideals. We have proved in the past that we can offer the last full measure of devotion; books like these help give us confidence that we can and will offer it again. They teach us the spirit expressed in a fine remark of Stanton's which Mr. Sandburg might well have included in his volume. Oliver P. Morton remarked to him that if the cause failed they would be overwhelmed with ruin and disgrace. Stanton replied: "If the Cause fails, I do not care to live."

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## CLIO AND MY AUNT BERTHA

(*Continued from page* 14)

any soldiers in the neighborhood. The family had moved from Georgia to Marion, Alabama, just before the outbreak of war.

"General Walthall and Captain Kouraysh used to visit father sometimes, and they would talk over things we children weren't allowed to hear."

This sounded amusing—my single-slave, fresco-painting grandsire entertaining a Confederate brass-hat and discussing the higher strategy with him in Weber and Fields English. Obviously the general was just another hoopsnake. But some impulse sent me to the Dictionary of American Biography, and there, in Volume XIX, was a whole page about Edward Cary Walthall, set forth by Professor Charles S. Sydnor of Duke University—like Aunt Bertha, a native Georgian.

My respect for Aunt Bertha as a primary source was now immovably fixed. She had no idea what the meetings with General Walthall and Captain Kouraysh were about, and would not bolster my attempts to impart to the colloquies a glamorous atmosphere—something to do with espionage, or at least some mysterious sort of intelligence work.

Captain Kouraysh would have fit this picture cozily enough. I spell the name as Aunt Bertha pronounces it; the accent is strongly on the last syllable. (She seems never to have seen it in print or writing.) Could it actually have been Captain Courage, uttered with some slight concession to Gallicization? And could "Captain Courage" have been the glittering incognito of some dashing beau sabreur who hid his flambeau under a bushel, some unsung Dixie D'Artagnan?

I am afraid not. In civil life Captain Kouraysh, however he may have spelled himself, operated a distillery. Aunt Bertha is sure of that. It is a calling that does not necessarily unfit one for high emprises, but Captain Kouraysh's distillery was right in Marion (or perhaps Selma), and he himself seems to have lived in the neighborhood all his life, or at least during all of the life that Aunt Bertha lived there. Her most romantic recollection of him (and the bulk of men have slenderer claims to the attribute) is that he could make a whacking rum omelet, whereof my grandfather, a teetotaler, would not partake. Grandfather seems to have allowed the children to sample it, or perhaps Captain Kouraysh sneaked a bit to Aunt Bertha. He would.

Whether these conferences with the commissioned personnel had anything to do with certain stealthy excavating activities on my grandfather's plantation I do not know, nor does Aunt Bertha. One night she heard the clink of shovels on a hill near the house; investigating, she discovered a cluster of soldiers busily scooping out the earth.

"This is my father's property!" she cried. What an awareness of ownership children have!

A posted sentry, annoyed at having a march stolen on him by a snip in pigtails, brandished a firearm and sent her pelting back into the house. Somehow — she cannot explain — she associates this incident with printing. She is too honest to essay any adventitious link. Were the soldiers constructing a cache for state papers, for currency, for bonds? Were they preparing to tuck a printing-press away in a cave? Or is the association of printing in Aunt Bertha's mind idle and fortuitous, and was some cautious back-area commander of troops simply playing with a reserve trench system?

"I don't know," is Aunt Bertha's answer. "I was just a little girl. Father told me to keep away, and not to ask questions."

Much of her reliability, indeed, inheres in her refusal to improvise. If she cannot answer a question she will say regretfully: "Not that I know of," or "I can't recall whether he did or not," or "That I don't remember," or "I don't think so, but I might be wrong," or "I don't know—you see I was so young."

Her father was three times called to service, three times invalided home. The spirit was eager, the flesh pitifully weak. On one return he bore in triumph a can of coffee. I have an idea, independent of Aunt Bertha's recollection, that this event occurred on October 18, 1864, for that was the day on which my father was born, and he has often told me (quoting his mother's testimony, no doubt) that the first thing he ever drank was coffee. My belief is that while the bacchanalia was at its height a woman neighbor who had played midwife, or perhaps Captain Kouraysh (ah, it must have been Captain Kouraysh!), cried: "Let's give the little fellow a drop—he may never taste it again!"

Whence the coffee? Aunt Bertha hasn't the slightest idea. Foraged? Borrowed, in a manner of speaking, from an officers' mess? Captured from the well-quartermastered Yankees? Nor does she recall whether the precious contents of the can were carefully rationed, or consumed in one wild orgy—a single grand *kaffee klatsch,* Southern style.

Anyway, the can was eventually emptied, whether in an hour, or days, or months. But keep your eye on it. It has a part yet to play in the family drama.

The coffee shortage is the only enforced war economy which Aunt Ber-

# The Criminal Record

### The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

| *Title and Author* | *Crime, Place, and Sleuth* | *Summing Up* | *Verdict* |
|---|---|---|---|
| THE CHARRED WITNESS<br>*George Harmon Coxe*<br>(Knopf: $2.) | Boston news-photographer, covering story on elusive genius, sticks around to solve murder and spy-plot. | Another acceptable chapter in criminological career of Kent Murdock and his tough sidekick Flanner. Plot has its muddy moments. | Standard brand |
| SAY YES TO MURDER<br>*W. T. Ballard*<br>(Putnam: $2.) | Two Hollywood actors and blackmailing wench perish violently, causing large migraine for Bill Lennox, studio trouble shooter. | Incessant action, peppery talk, good central character—and interesting subsidiaries—put this cut above most Hollywood homicides. | Good tough 'un |
| LEOPARD CATS CRADLE<br>*Jerome Barry*<br>(Crime Club: $2.) | Death of actor in N. Y. drugstore basement and subsequent horrid happenings give medico detective a tricky job. | Not-too-tame cheetah, and some diverting data on aboriginal string-figures (tied up with plot) affect a sometimes confusing story. | Exhilarating |
| THE MOVING FINGER<br>*Agatha Christie*<br>(Dodd, Mead: $2.) | Venomous epistles of poison-penner agitate English hamlet and cause two deaths. Miss Marple solves it. | Although soft-spoken spinster sleuth appears quite late in book, events preceding her arrival are exciting and denouement deftly contrived. | Satisfactory |



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tha remembers. Perhaps, as a child of from four to eight, she should not have remembered even that. I suspect that she recalls rather the complaints of her elders. German born and reared, they must have missed their tipple as Uncle Steve would have missed his watermelon (of which there was an abundance). There were beef, pork, vegetables in plenty. There was little wheat, but Alabama ate and drank corn; there was little sugar, but this was a molasses era and a molasses country.

There was an end of war at last, and the men who had fought for the bonnie blue flag (Aunt Bertha uses the phrase without affectation) came home. Aunt Bertha, along with other children, stood on the seminary steps to see them march by, and little Frances Sellick climbed to the flat top of one of the stone posts for a better view. It was a tatterdemalion company that passed, plodding along at ragged route step—one-armed men, one-legged men, men with matted hair on their heads and matted clothes on their backs, listless men, dazed men, battered human driftwood washed up beyond reach of the ebbing tides of disaster. Suddenly a ragged, bearded fellow broke ranks and rushed toward the stone post on which Frances Sellick was sitting. He reached up, grasped her in his arms, ran back into formation with her. Her screams echoed back down the road as the line wound on—echoed back, Aunt Bertha is sure, even after the bedraggled veteran had been able to convince Frances that he was her father.

Grandfather sold the plantation not as a gesture of despair but because the condition of his lungs made it imperative for him to go North. That is what his doctor told him. The doctor is a vague and nameless entity to Aunt Bertha. Grandfather had consumption, and in those days one sought to cure consumption by running away from it, not realizing that instead one ran away with it.

The empty coffee can (carefully treasured for memory's sake) was brought out and stuffed with what Aunt Bertha, with a certain relish, calls "the family jewels," plus a few carefully husbanded gold coins. Abandoning all else, the family set out—father, mother, daughters of nine and eight (the daughter of nine, Aunt Dora, died many years ago), a son of two (my father, now seventy-six).

Their destination was Hoboken, where grandfather had an older sister—her son, fighting for the Union, had fallen in the Wilderness. ("A bullet hit him right between the eyes.") The Hoboken air, small wonder, did not improve grandfather's condition. A Yankee doctor, true to the medical conventions of his day, ordered the patient south.

"So we went back. Father died at Athens, Georgia, on February 9, 1867. They buried him on a hilltop."

His widow felt no urge to stay in the South. They all went back to Hoboken. Aunt Bertha carried away a final memory.

She told me how she sat on the front stoop of her aunt's Hoboken house, humming to herself. The hum broke into words:

> Jeff Davis is a gentleman, and Lincoln is a fool,
> Jeff Davis rides a milk-white horse, and Lincoln rides a mule.

A man came along the street and stopped to listen quizzically. He must have been a kindly soul, and certainly he was not waving a bloody shirt. Perhaps he knew that a boy had gone out of that house to die.

"You'd better not sing that around here, young lady, or somebody's liable to cut your head off."

Aunt Bertha ran into the house. It seems to have been her favorite method of eluding a dilemma.

"But I don't think now that Lincoln was a fool," she adds. "I was only a little girl then."

## ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Fitzgerald: Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend. 2. Miller: Behind him lay the gray Azores. 3. Whittier: Blessings on thee, little man. 4. Scott: Breathes there the man with soul so dead. 5. Keats: Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art. 6 Marlowe: Come live with me and be my love. 7. Pope: Descend, ye Nine! descend and sing. 8. Gray: Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife. 9. Burns: Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes! 10. Shakespeare: Full fathom five thy father lies. 11. Browning: Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats. 12. Watts: How doth the little busy bee Improve each shining hour. 13. Coleridge: In Xanadu did Kubla Khan A stately pleasure-dome decree. 14. Wordsworth: I wandered lonely as a cloud. 15. Blake: Little Lamb, who made thee? 16. Tennyson: My strength is as the strength of ten Because my heart is pure. 17. Poe: Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary, Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore. 18. Shelley: O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being. 19. Byron: She walks in beauty, like the night. 20. Rossetti: The blessed damozel leaned out From the gold bar of Heaven. 21. Carroll: 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves Did gyre and gimble in the wabe. 22. Poe: 'Twas many and many a year ago in a kingdom by the sea. 23. Chaucer: Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote. 24. Whitman: When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed. 25. Hood: With fingers weary and worn, With eyelids heavy and red.


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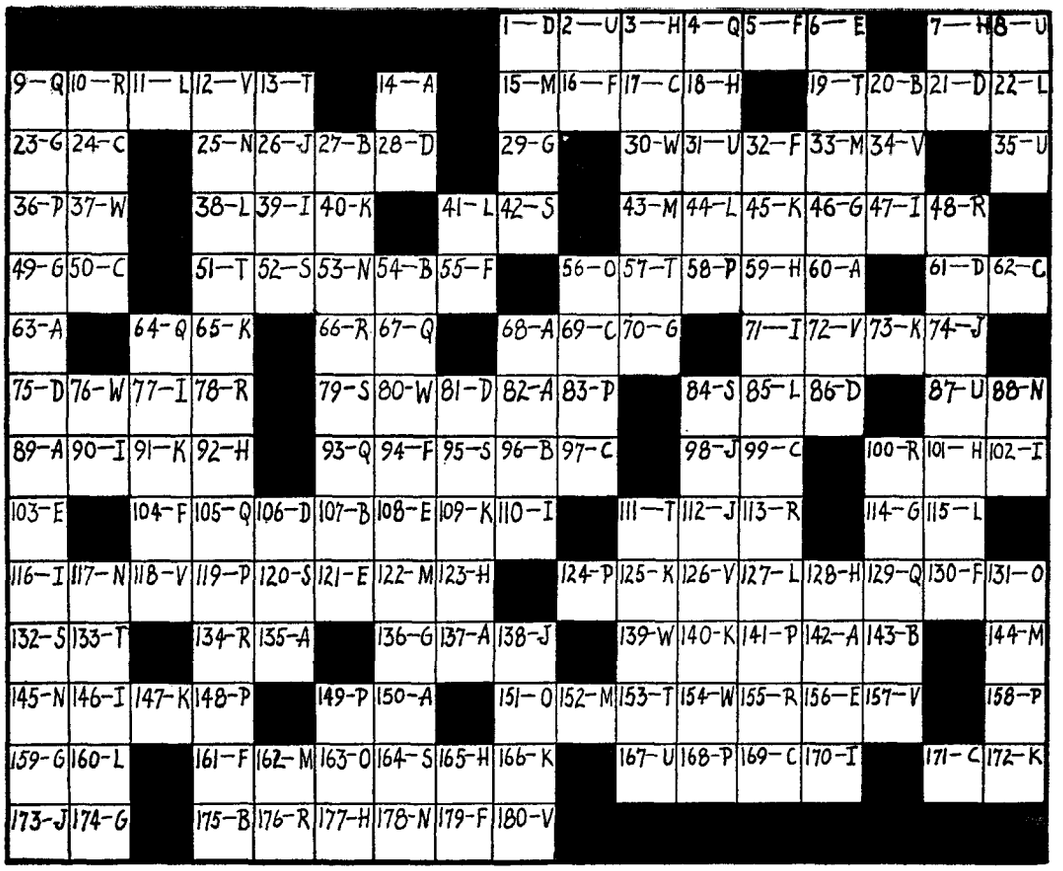
# The Crostics Club

THE Club is becoming a sort of clearing-house. In the lost-and-found category are Arthur Bryant and Harvey Officer, the former apparently an old schoolmate of a Lowell, Mass., puzzler, whereas the latter's address was requested by an erstwhile schoolmate from Evanston. Eunice Stebbins, Milton, Mass., was pleased to read of her beloved blind mother with whom she worked the weekly DC. George Arms wonders whether anyone has pursued further that investigation he started into the Whitewashing article credited to Franklin. Laura Armitage, of the Public Relations Dept., C. & O. R.R., friend of our telegraph operator of Scott Depot, Va., discovered our tribute to Anne Edwards in a batch of unopened *S.R.L.'s* Anne had given her in the hospital where Anne lay slowly recovering from broken bones received in a serious collision with a truck. Laura returned the special number to cheer Anne. Ida de Carbonel, San Francisco, on seeing mention of Friend Richardson, ex-Governor of California, recalls that she acquired the DC habit under him as her Chief.

Octogenarians are among our most cherished followers. Mrs. T. W. Davis, Thomasville, Ala., writes that at four-score and nine she with her daughter enjoys the DCs without a peek at an answer. Among our keen-edged elder puzzlers are Mrs. Morgan Grinnell and her friend Alice Weeks, of New York, kin of the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* who pool their resources weekly. Lunching with them for the latest DC gossip was always a red-letter occasion. One day I entered brandishing with justifiable pride my first fan letter from Ambassador Grew, whereupon said dear Mrs. G., familiarly, "Why, Jo's mother-in-law, Mrs. Lilla Cabot, was my own cousin." I showed Alice Weeks and Mrs. G.'s secretary how to concoct a DC. Later I learned that Alice had profited by making a specially tricky one for Mrs. G. In relating the incident, Mrs. G. told me that one key word that had eluded her came in a flash as she lay sleepless one bitter cold night. She got up, and, seeking the warmest room of the apartment, sat down and finished the DC! (Do you recall the grandmother in a Mary E. Wilkins tale whose passion for working sums on an old slate made her oblivious to the absence of a little granddaughter; and how, after an exciting hunt involving the whole neighborhood, when the child was found grandmother went back to her slate and calmly finished the sum?) One afternoon at Oyster Bay, Mrs. G. chanced to be working a DC whose content was a letter from Teddy Roosevelt to Edith Carow, his sister-in-law, about his frolics with the children. At that very moment in walked Edith Carow herself!

E. S. K.




# Double-Crostics: No. 449

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

### DIRECTIONS

*To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-three words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary* ***(1940 edition).***

**The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 13 of this issue.**

### DEFINITIONS

**A.** The term of office of the chief magistrate of ancient Athens.

**B.** A "faithful" friend to Aeneas.

**C.** A type of human body of medium limb length and head dimensions.

**D.** As a fact (phrase).

**E.** Suspicious; distrustful (slang).

**F.** Drawn into a smaller compass.

**G.** Flattery or insincere promises (Fr.)

**H.** Not of necessity.

**I.** One time and finally (3 wds.)

**J.** American painter (1849-1921).

**K.** A nonsense refrain used as an exclamation of pleasure (comp.)

**L.** Obsequious (comp.)

**M.** Indians on the reservations in Arizona, New Mexico, Okla.

**N.** To waver uncertainly; to jiggle.

**O.** A particle.

**P.** Gritty; sandy.

**Q.** After the manner of Homo sapiens.

**R.** Used, applied, or administered as medicine.

**S.** Public gossip (2 wds.)

**T.** With succinctness.

**U.** Nests of birds of prey.

**V.** A fox in a medieval epic.

**W.** To soil.

### WORDS

14 63 82 137 150 135 68 89 142 60

20 175 143 27 96 54 107

169 50 97 99 171 62 24 17 69

81 28 86 61 75 106 1 21

121 108 156 103 6

130 94 179 5 104 161 16 55 32

174 29 46 49 70 159 114 136 23

59 18 101 7 177 165 128 123 3 92

71 39 116 170 110 77 146 102 47 90

98 26 112 74 138 173

65 140 73 91 172 109 40 147 166 45 125

22 38 115 41 11 44 127 85 160

162 15 33 152 144 122 43

25 145 178 53 88 117

163 151 131 56

149 58 124 83 158 119 36 168 141 148

9 129 105 93 64 67 4

10 48 100 66 155 134 113 176 78

42 84 79 95 164 52 132 120

153 111 19 13 51 57 133

2 35 87 31 8 167

34 126 180 72 118 157 12

37 139 76 154 30 80



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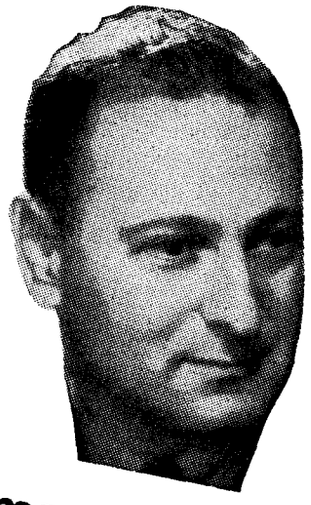
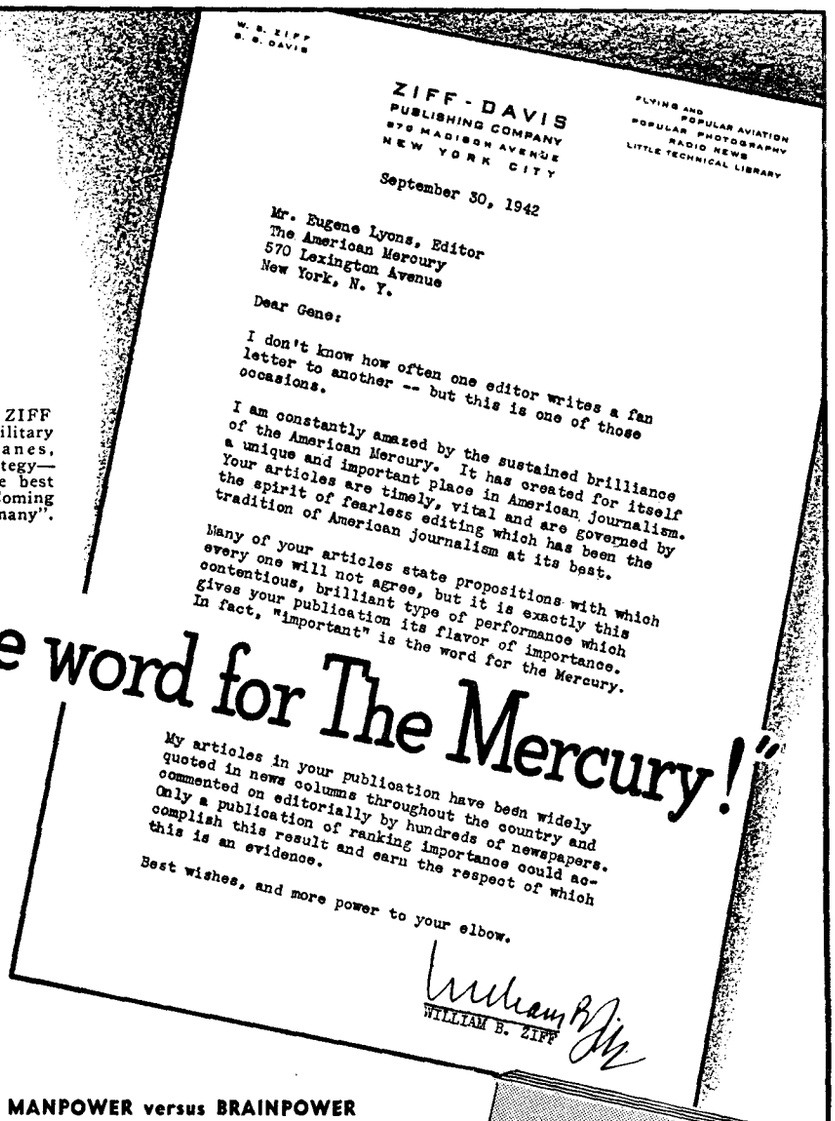


WILLIAM B. ZIFF
Authority on military affairs, war planes, tactics and strategy—author of the best seller "The Coming Battle Of Germany".



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September 30, 1942

Mr. Eugene Lyons, Editor
The American Mercury
570 Lexington Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Gene:

I don't know how often one editor writes a fan letter to another -- but this is one of those occasions.

I am constantly amazed by the sustained brilliance of the American Mercury. It has created for itself a unique and important place in American journalism. Your articles are timely, vital and are governed by the spirit of fearless editing which has been the tradition of American journalism at its best.

Many of your articles state propositions with which every one will not agree, but it is exactly this contentious, brilliant type of performance which gives your publication its flavor of importance. In fact, "important" is the word for the Mercury.

My articles in your publication have been widely quoted in news columns throughout the country and commented on editorially by hundreds of newspapers. Only a publication of ranking importance could accomplish this result and earn the respect of which this is an evidence.

Best wishes, and more power to your elbow.

William B. Ziff

WILLIAM B. ZIFF

# "Important is the word for The Mercury!"

Yes, important *is* the word for the Mercury — vitally, immeasurably important to you — to every American. For here, every month, are spotlighted the issues which may affect your way of life — the *trends of today* which make the *news of tomorrow*. The November American Mercury is typical of the monthly fare served to Mercury readers. Get your copy today! Read what men who know think about the things you are worrying about.

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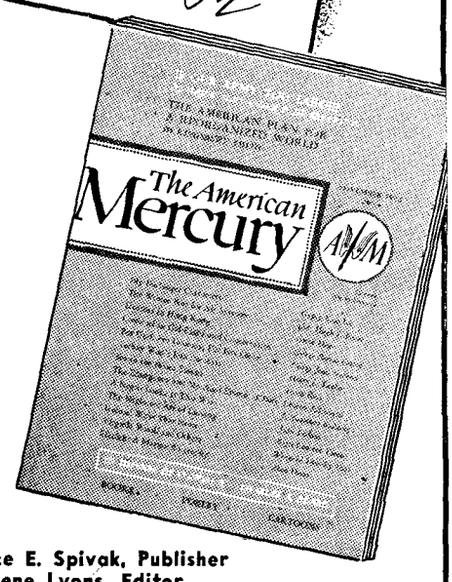


**Lawrence E. Spivak, Publisher**
**Eugene Lyons, Editor**

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